

Sample News Release to Announce Your Radon Activities

*To announce your radon campaign to the media, send them a news release. The sample release below can serve as a guide for creating your own. Be sure to time the release during or near National Radon Action Week (October 14-20, 2001). Or, if your radon campaign activities will occur during an alternate time (which is perfectly fine!), send this out to fit your schedule. Print the letter double spaced on your organization's stationery and fill in local information where **[indicated]**. You may also wish to tailor this release to announce a special event, press conference, or other campaign activity.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: **[Your name and phone number]**

[Community] ANNOUNCES CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT FAMILIES FROM RADON

Citizens Urged to Test Homes for Radon the Second Leading Cause of Lung Cancer in U.S.

[Your city, state, date] -- **[Organization]** is aligned with the American Lung Association and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in a major campaign to educate Americans about the dangers of radon exposure and to encourage them to take action to identify and fix radon problems in their homes. To this end, **[organization]** is conducting **[briefly describe local radon action activities]**. The events are in conjunction with National Radon Action Week, which is October 14-21, 2001. National Radon Action Week kicks off with a Presidential Message from the White House asking Americans to take preventative action on this health risk. The purpose of the week is to draw attention to radon as a serious public health issue and, more importantly, to motivate Americans to take action to protect themselves from radon health effects. It is a health hazard that is present in elevated levels in about **[X]**% of **[area]** homes (**info available from state radon office**), which compares with over 6% of homes across all of America.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless gas that is harmlessly dispersed in outdoor air, but when trapped in buildings, can be harmful at elevated levels. The science on radon has been formidable over the years, but never before have we had such overwhelming scientific consensus and robust data to support that exposure to elevated levels of radon causes lung cancer in humans.

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in February, 1998 presented the findings of their Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation (BEIR) VI Report: "The Health Effects of Exposure to Indoor Radon." This report by the NAS is the most definitive accumulation of scientific data on indoor radon. The report confirms that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. and that it is a serious public health problem. The NAS concluded that radon causes between 15,000 and 22,000 lung cancer deaths each year. "However," says **[spokesperson]** from **[organization]** "because you can't see or smell radon, people tend to minimize the health effects and ignore the possibility that it might exist in elevated levels in their homes."

Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and inexpensive. And, if discovered,

radon problems can be fixed. Radon test kits that meet EPA guidelines are available at local hardware stores, home improvement stores, some supermarkets, other retail outlets, or directly from a laboratory. Information on how to purchase a radon detector is available from your state's radon office. Many are priced under \$25.00. Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to that for many common home repairs such as painting or having a new water heater installed (anywhere from \$500 to about \$2,500).

[Organization] urges **[area]** residents to take action during this year's National Radon Action Week by testing their homes for elevated levels of radon. It is a serious public health hazard with a straightforward solution. For more information on radon, radon testing, and radon mitigation, call **[organization]** at **[organization's phone number]**.